

My name is Donna Rogers. I live in Higganum; I am a volunteer with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network; and I am a fourteen year breast cancer survivor. I have two adult sons, both of whom started smoking as young teenagers.

Did you know that almost one third of cancer deaths in Connecticut each year are directly related to tobacco use? And that doesn't count lung diseases and heart conditions . These diseases are 100% preventable.

I know that my cancer was not related to tobacco use; but I do know how scary it was to hear those words, "You have cancer." I will do whatever I can to ensure that others don't have to hear those dreaded words.

Did you know that Connecticut is the only state that does not fund tobacco prevention and cessation programs? We receive \$473.2 million per year between tobacco settlement money and tobacco revenue. We need to use some of this money to fund tobacco prevention and cessation programs, rather than continuing to put it in the general fund. Our state is in a better position financially now than it was in 2015, when then Governor Malloy removed this funding from the budget. So now is the time to act.

Considering that Connecticut spends \$3.02 billion per year in tobacco related health costs, I feel that funding these programs at the rate of \$12 million per year is a small price to pay. The health of our loved ones and future generations is at stake. Please consider funding these programs going forward.